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ABSTRACT

The Job Corps Student Teaching Project is a combined effort of Job Corps and the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education. A major difference between traditional school settings and Job Corps centers is that the center is a full-time, round-the-clock program which provides food, clothing, lodging, counseling, medical care, and recreation--plus basic and vocational education; the program often accommodates teacher trainees in dormitories as well. The teacher trainee is a college undergraduate who is asked to serve as a resource person and consultant, rather than fill the traditional teacher role of presenter of information. The students he teaches are probably dropouts, 16 to 21 years old, usually in need of remedial work. (The document describes methods of recruitment and selection; orientation; supervision; project seminars; and impact on the student teacher, teacher training institution, and professional community.) (JA)

JOB CORPS: An Educational Alternative

American
Association
of Colleges
for Teacher
Education

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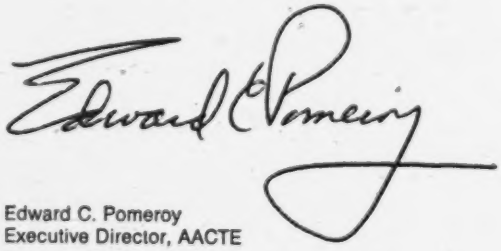
"Job Corps: An Educational Alternative" is the third in a series of reports to the teacher education community from the AACTE-Job Corps Teacher Education Project. *A Resource for Teacher Education* described the early stages of the program, and *Guidance Training for Today* reported on a special effort of the program. While this report concerns itself primarily with the academic year 1969-1970, it is impossible to isolate this time-segment without reference to previous efforts. Therefore, a certain amount of material is included to provide background for the current report.

To those who were closely involved with the project from its inception in the spring of 1968, a new trend in the current effort is evident. The project, as originally conceived, was limited to the exploration of Job Corps centers as sites for student teaching experiences. Colleges and universities are increasingly using these centers as sites for additional experiences for preservice teachers. Observation, participation, tutoring, and related classes are now taking place at Job Corps centers. Hence, the broader term, *teacher education project,* seems more appropriate.

Another trend is perhaps more subtle but equally indicative of change in both the project and the participants. There is a pervading feeling of confidence on the part of the students, the college faculty, and the Job Corps staff that says "Not only is this project possible, it's a good thing to do."

In the short time the AACTE-Job Corps Teacher Education Project has been in existence, it has had considerable impact on the preparation of teachers. The question as to whether part of a preservice teacher's preparation can take place in a Job Corps center has been answered, and the answer has been an emphatic "yes." Indeed, the project has helped to stimulate thinking as to what are acceptable sites for a preservice teacher's professional laboratory experience. There seems now little question but that the efforts of the AACTE-Job Corps venture should be continued and a diligent search be made to further utilize the rich resources for teacher education that Job Corps centers have to offer. The experience gained thus far should aid teacher educators as they seek to provide other non-public school experiences for their students.

The success of any new and innovative venture is dependent upon the efforts of many individuals and organizations. The endorsement and support of CCSSO, NASSP, TEPS, ATE, NCATE, and NASDTEC were of primary importance to the success of the effort. The participating students with their energy and let's-try-it attitude were in reality "students of teaching" and performed admirably. The Association is of course indebted to the colleges and universities and their staffs who have cooperated in making it possible for this project to point new directions in teacher education. To the Job Corps which has provided financial support and to the individual cooperating centers throughout the country, much credit should be given. The leadership which Robert J. Stevenson has provided in the success of the project to date is acknowledged with appreciation.



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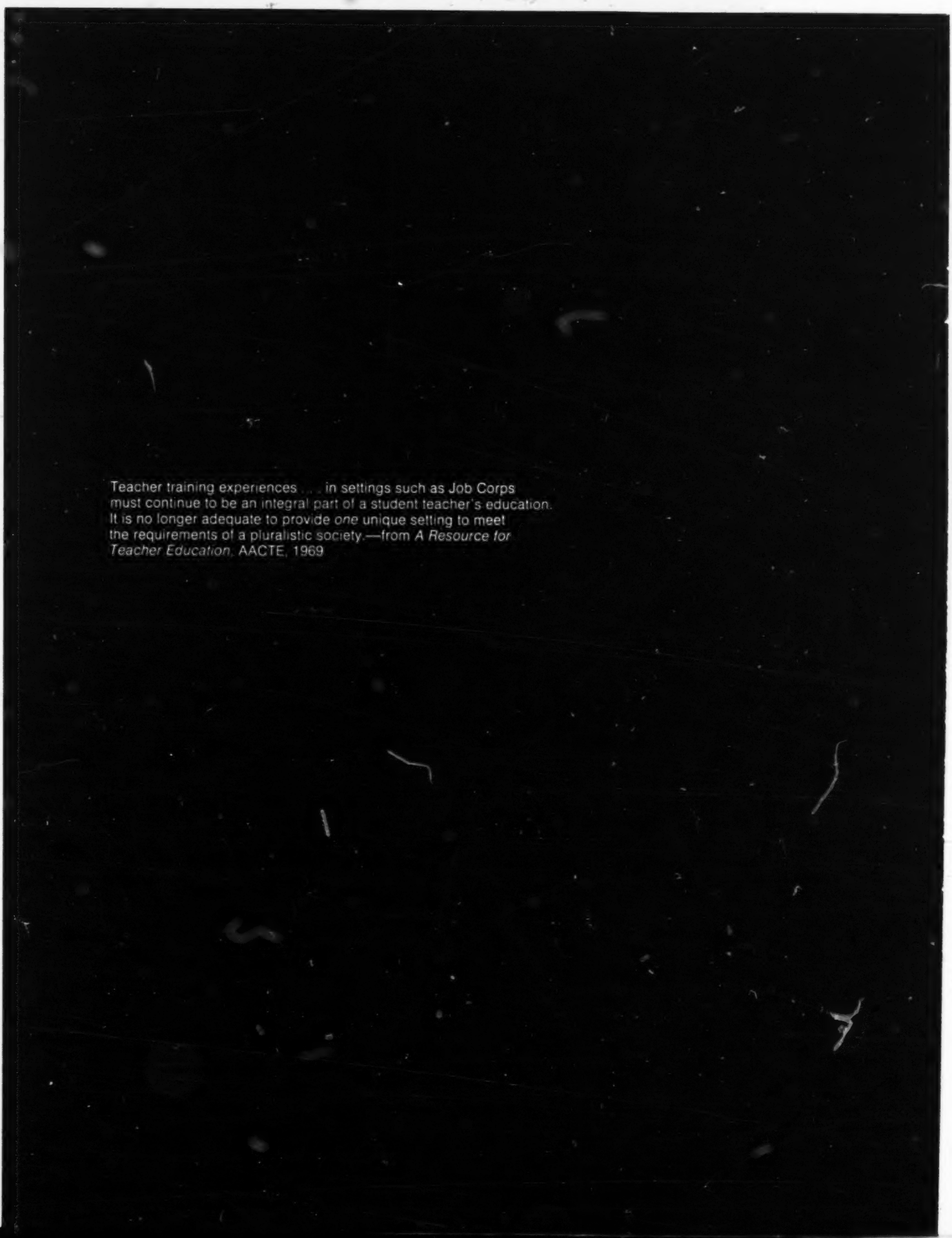

Teacher training experiences . . . in settings such as Job Corps must continue to be an integral part of a student teacher's education. It is no longer adequate to provide *one* unique setting to meet the requirements of a pluralistic society.—from *A Resource for Teacher Education*, AACTE, 1969

Part 1

The Idea

In the Sixties, at a time when preservice teachers were asking that field experiences from "the real world" be built into teacher training programs and when educators were asking urgently for innovative techniques to reach "disadvantaged" youth, the idea of using a Job Corps setting for student teaching began to take shape.

In the spring of 1968, the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, at the request of Job Corps, embarked on a program which would take the student teacher out of the conventional classroom. Such a program would test three propositions:

- That student teaching in Job Corps centers could be a valid experience for beginning teachers,
- That working with youth in these centers could provide valuable learning experiences for future inner city and other disadvantaged area teachers, and
- That teaching materials used in such a setting could have broad application for use in the public schools.

This would entail a major change—that the traditional school setting would be exchanged for a Job Corps center.

Inevitably, skepticism was expressed by educators at all levels as well as by Job Corps officials. The colleges and universities were dubious about scheduling half a student's practice teaching in a Job Corps center. Would that time be applicable to a state teaching certificate? Would supervision in the centers be adequate? Was the Job Corps educational program academically sound? What kind of models would Job Corps instructors make for impressionable undergraduates? Public school cooperating teachers also were concerned about releasing their student teachers. Nor was uneasiness confined to the academy. Seasoned Job Corps staffers also had reservations. Could untrained college students, themselves not much older than the students, make a positive contribution within the pressurized atmosphere of a center? Such uncertainty notwithstanding, a small number of interested universities were matched with nearby Job Corps centers,* and in September 1968 the AACTE-Job Corps Project went into formal operation.

With the program well into its third year, fears have been dispelled and Job Corps student teaching is now viewed as a relevant and desirable exposure for preservice teachers. Let us examine the elements which are involved in the project and how this conclusion was reached. In particular, let us examine the Job Corps setting, the Job Corps student, and the preservice teacher.

The Job Corps Setting

One difference between conventional student teaching in the public schools and that in Job Corps centers is the live-in, or residential, feature of the center. Since Job Corps is a full-time, round-the-clock program where food, clothing, lodging, counseling, medical care, and recreation—plus basic and vocational education—are provided, the teacher is able to achieve a totality of interaction with the Corps member. In addition, wherever facilities are available, teacher trainees are accommodated in the dormitories. It is thus difficult to compare the experiences of a student teacher who leaves his assignment at three o'clock with that of a resident trainee in a Job Corps center—sharing evening bull sessions with his students, chaperoning their dances, counseling them. The permanent center staff is available constantly, and its expertise can be brought to bear when needed, not the next day or after the weekend. Hence, the student teacher lives a more intense, more highly charged, intimate experience.

*Weber State College in Ogden, Utah
Cleveland State University in Cleveland, Ohio
University of New Mexico in Albuquerque, New Mexico
University of Oregon in Eugene, Oregon
University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, Minnesota
Central Washington State College in Ellensburg, Washington

The Job Corps Student

Usually someone who did not "make it" in school, the Job Corps student is someone whom the schools failed to serve. He has already been out into the world and made the sobering discovery that getting, holding, and advancing in a job requires some proficiency in basic educational and vocational skills. Now, somewhere between 16 and 21 years old, he has come to the Job Corps, willing to give himself and education another chance.

He usually needs remedial work. Although he has had nine years of schooling, his average reading level is at fifth grade. His arithmetic skills are no better. He needs vocational training. He also needs health care. Approximately twenty-two percent of those corpsmen eligible for the Armed Forces were rejected for physical reasons; half had never seen a doctor or dentist; many needed eyeglasses and dental work. Consequently, the Job Corps student is often overwhelmed by feelings of frustration and hopelessness and lacks the skills and confidence to succeed.

The Teacher Trainee

A college undergraduate, the teacher trainee must confront high-school dropouts who have different backgrounds and values from his own. He must learn to communicate with students who have totally different frames of reference.

The atmosphere of a Job Corps center differs from that of the usual public school. Because there is much individual instruction, Corpsmen come and go informally: they are free to take a break, to "rap," to bring coffee to class. So the teacher trainee must learn to teach single individuals and clusters of young adults, not a classroom of children. Since new waves of enrollees are admitted continuously, programs must be flexible enough to absorb the new arrivals at their own levels. Each enrollee is given a diagnostic test for placement purposes and then is allowed to progress through individualized instruction at his own pace. The program is geared to have him experience success in small steps, without competition or grading.

In this setting, the preservice teacher takes on a different role from that of the traditional teacher trainee in the public school. He becomes a resource person or consultant rather than a presentor of information or knowledge. The student teacher is able to observe and use methods and materials, such as programmed instruction, to a degree not possible in most public or private schools. Such a teacher is adjusting to the needs of the learner—not the reverse. There is nothing new in this approach; educational leaders have recommended it for decades. The difference is that Job Corps teachers actually use it, and with students who failed in the traditional academic setting. The student teacher, therefore, can gain insight into the application of a guidance-oriented school program in a highly individualized setting. He can work with disadvantaged pupils without encountering the frequently overpowering problems of classroom management and control. Corpsmen, more mature and serious, usually are motivated to succeed.

For the student teacher, Job Corps takes him directly into the social arena and "relevance" becomes more than a mere word.

Part 2

The Project

Four AACTE institutions, Weber State College in Ogden, Utah; Cleveland State University in Cleveland, Ohio; the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque; and the University of Oregon in Eugene participated in the program in the '68-'69 school year. They were joined by two others the following year, Indiana University in Bloomington, and West Virginia State College in Institute. The University of Minnesota, the University of Maine, and Central Washington State College were forced to abandon the project in the spring of 1969 when the cooperating Job Corps centers in their areas were closed.

All projects involved students and faculty observers in elementary and secondary education; at Indiana University and the University of Maine, graduate students in guidance and counseling participated as well.

Table
Number of Teachers and Observers by Educational Institution and by Job Corps Centers

Institution	Job Corps Center	Student Teachers[1]	Student Observers[2] and Participants	Faculty Observers[3] and Participants
University of Maine	Poland Springs	8	—	4
Cleveland State University	Cleveland	17	34	20
University of Oregon	Tongue Point	48	159	65
University of New Mexico	Albuquerque	33	110	18
Weber State College	Clearfield	12	11	14
West Virginia State	Charleston	21	81	15
Indiana University	Atterbury	49	135	36
	TOTAL	188	530	172

[1] Includes 160 elementary and secondary teachers and 28 counseling and guidance practicum students
[2] Includes 448 observers and 82 participants
[3] Includes 150 classroom teachers and other observers, and 22 participants

Recruitment and Selection

Unfamiliarity with Job Corps and apprehension about the nature and value of the new program caused recruitment of student teachers to lag at first. But as the program in the centers developed, some colleges had to resort to screening applicants for the limited number of places available. In addition to word-of-mouth recruitment, interest was generated by announcements, classroom presentations, and organized visits to the centers.

The approach to screening student teachers ranged from simple acceptance to lengthy interviews. To date, selection has been based largely on the judgment of the institution's teacher preparation staff and the center's training director. The intent was to identify those student teachers who believe they will eventually work with "disadvantaged" youth. In screenings at Indiana University, for example, attempts were made to discourage applicants for the Atterbury Job Corps Center who saw it as a convenient place to hide their own inadequacies, a podium from which they could "lead the march," a place in which to perform a missionary function or to show they had all the "answers." After screening initially in this fashion, the university decided to weigh selection on the basis of *positive* factors—those identified by supervising teachers as bearing on a teacher trainee's success.

Orientation

Orientation procedures vary on each participating campus. Supervisors from the universities and directors of education at the centers frequently share an important part in the process. The presence of student teaching directors was especially useful when the project first began, in allaying student apprehension that the Job Corps experience would not prepare them for the public schools. Some colleges, the University of New Mexico and Cleveland State University, for example, involve undergraduates in preservice experience such as tutor-

ing at a center prior to their student teaching. By working directly with corps members, students have a chance to learn about the Job Corps educational program and to learn what teaching is all about. This has proved one of the best forms of orientation.

One college linked its undergraduate seminar on "the culture of poverty" with the Job Corps orientation process. Trainees were encouraged, with the help of the group, to overcome their personal prejudices concerning people with different heritages. Somehow, the experience seems to help teacher trainees to develop a new concept of self, a new way of looking at themselves and others.

Teaching

Because the Job Corps curriculum is, in a sense, prescribed, student teachers are surprised to find opportunities for creative intervention in the learning process. When a West Virginia State student suggested combining art instruction with the reading program, the answer came back, "Why not? Go ahead and try it." A curricular change which might have taken weeks or months in the schools was here instituted immediately.

Innovation is eminently possible because the student teacher is not bound to the traditional role of the teacher as dispenser of knowledge. Another student teacher developed and used a program in "new math" based on concepts in algebra, sets, sub-sets, symbols, and factoring. A third worked up a special unit on ethnic backgrounds which was carried on after he completed his student teaching at the Job Corps center.

Understandably, as a result of their Job Corps experience, student teachers come to view themselves less as agents for disseminating fixed subject content, and more as innovators and facilitators, enabling young people to realize their potential more fully.

Supervision

If the role of the student teacher is altered profoundly in a Job Corps setting, so is that of the supervisor. Supervisory techniques employed successfully in the public schools may need modification in the Job Corps setting, where instruction is individually oriented. Experienced college supervisors, accustomed to working with large groups, discover that in dealing with one-to-one relationships, their approaches must be altered. Skills in sensitive affective areas, such as interpersonal relations and small group dynamics, suddenly loom as major considerations. They are fundamental in helping the student teacher relate to youngsters with totally different backgrounds from their own. Student teachers have to redefine their preconceived notions of teaching style. Supervisors have to question their conventional assumptions about the act of teaching.

Job Corps asked that each participating institution designate a supervisor to work specifically with the student teachers. Supervisors ranged from doctoral candidates to directors of student teaching, some devoting full time to the project, others part time.

For example, the Indiana University supervisor was provided an office at Atterbury Job Corps Center where he spent four days each week. He was thus available to the student teacher and center cooperating teachers for advice or assistance. He also assumed an orientation function. Says the university: "One of the things which made the university supervisor effective was the ten-week period at the beginning of the year when he was at the center each day, every day, to orient himself to the center, its personnel, purposes, and program. He was able to use this time to orient the staff to the coming student teachers and to our expectations for them, and to select those teachers who would serve as supervisors. This was time that we have never been able to provide for our supervisors and it has reinforced our belief in its value." West Virginia State College felt that student teachers

were cognizant of their role and would seize upon the tasks at hand on their own. Accordingly, the supervisor visited each student once a week for a class period and a follow-up conference. For the future a model for supervision based upon a set of objectives—possible behavioral competencies—which might be prepared cooperatively with the college supervisor, Job Corps staff, and the student teachers is recommended.

The University of New Mexico also favored a resident-type supervisor-coordinator with multiple functions. He maintained contact with student teachers, cooperating center teachers, center administrators, and Corpswomen. He visited all student teachers once or twice a week, assisted with biweekly seminars, was available for planning and curriculum development activities, and helped with avocational and counseling programs. A most successful element of this university's supervisory program was provided by the class in supervision conducted by a professor and the director of laboratory experiences.

Cleveland State University asked the center to designate a "field associate" who would participate in the supervision and evaluation of the project teachers. He would also be responsible for holding conferences with student teachers and cooperating teachers; arranging seminars for student teachers; reviewing evaluations of cooperating teachers and recommending an academic grade for each student teacher; and participating in meetings at the university as a member of an "educational methods team" composed of university faculty and field associates from the public schools.

Association with Job Corps centers has involved university supervisors in a multiplicity of unanticipated functions. They have been called upon to supervise their project's operating budget, to help design the student teaching program, to assist in the recruitment, screening, and selection of trainees, and often to translate the project's purposes to the Job Corps staff, the community, and their own teacher training institutions. Such demands indicate a need to give further thought to preparing the supervisor for his responsibilities.

Project Seminars

In recasting the relationship of the teacher trainee and student, regularly scheduled project seminars, drawing on Job Corps staff and college faculty, are of critical importance. The design and content of these seminars varied from campus to campus. Some seminars continued to emphasize traditional topics—planning, motivation, and the teaching of vocational subjects. Others "zero-ed in" on techniques for handling individual differences, teaching English as a second language, and the role of the teacher in giving advice and guidance. Cleveland State University used the seminar as a workshop to explore the societal inadequacies that produce a Job Corps student and examined such topics as "hidden prejudice," "the sociology of poverty," and "class and race as educational factors."

The University of Oregon conducted weekly or biweekly seminars to discuss readings in educational reform, contemporary goals of education, inter- and intrapersonal competency, and individual and common problems encountered in the classroom.

West Virginia State College seminars dwelt on classroom management, planning and organizing for teaching, behavioral objectives, conferencing techniques, professional obligations of teachers, the teacher and school law.

Indiana University held a weekly formalized seminar for its counseling and guidance practicum students at which audio tapes of individual counseling sessions with Jobs Corpsmen were discussed.

The University of New Mexico held training seminars for the student teachers at the Albuquerque center twice a week to discuss teaching of English as a second language and teaching of vocational subjects.

Part 3

The Impact

In determining the impact of the AACTE-Job Corps Project, it might be useful to reexamine its objectives. That teaching in Job Corps centers could be a valid experience in the preparation of beginning teachers would seem to be borne out by the decision of participating institutions to continue and expand their 1970-71 programs. Several plan to use Job Corps centers as a regular part of their future teacher training programs, and some will even include pre-student teaching experiences.

Inasmuch as many of the student teachers are still in college or have just completed their studies, it will not be possible to validate the proposition that working with Job Corps youth can provide valuable experience for future teachers of the "disadvantaged" until a follow-up study is completed by AACTE. This special study will include the job placement of all graduates in the program from fall 1968 through spring 1971.

AACTE's responsibility for testing material was on a limited basis and this area has been tested in greater depth through an NEA-Jobs Corps effort known as Project Interchange. The results definitely suggest that the Job Corps basic education system is suitable for use with potential dropouts in public school settings.

When the AACTE-Job Corps Project began in 1968, nobody could forecast its effects. Today the program carries implications for many sectors of the educational world. Student teachers have, of course, been affected most directly, but so have teacher training institutions, Job Corps staff members, public school systems, and the broader educational community. What has the project meant to each of these sometimes overlapping constituencies?

Impact on the Student Teacher

The trainees came to regard the centers as places which encouraged innovation. Beyond the opportunity to create something new and succeed, many student teachers found an even rarer opportunity—the "freedom to fail," the chance to try an idea and not be rejected when it falls flat.

The project has also had both cognitive and affective implications. Cognitively, student teaching in a Job Corps center presented trainees with an opportunity to work in a program of individually prescribed instruction. Unlike many instructional situations, Job Corps begins with carefully defined objectives and provides a sequential teaching program designed to move toward those objectives. As for the affective domain, students frequently cite the richness in interpersonal relationships. Trainees feel they have an opportunity to know themselves better. They acquire confidence in their ability to relate to people of many different cultural backgrounds and value systems—essential to "making it" in a Job Corps center. Personal judgments about the worth of individuals who have been involved with drugs, failure in school, and failure on the job are challenged and often modified.

In this connection, it is interesting to quote from the student teachers themselves:

"A marvelous thing occurred which helped me synthesize this teaching experience. When we were studying vocabulary, one word was *pessimistic*, which a girl defined as 'a person who looks at the wrong side of life'. Her idea was right, but *pessimistic* is not a noun but an adjective. The teacher was trying to explain this, but no one understood. Then, someone popped up with the right idea: 'I know! It's like *psychology* and *psychologist*. The idea and the man!' All of a sudden, out of chaos, thought was brought into focus, and communication and understanding started happening. It is things like these that make teaching worthwhile."

"One night at supper, I was talking with one of the Corpswomen. Lily was her name. She told me that she really liked to talk with me, because I made her comfort-

able, that she was going to miss me. I guess that has been the greatest thing given to me at Job Corps: an honest show of love and friendship."

"I feel that student teaching at Job Corps has given me an insight into the nature of young people that I could not have gained in a regular school system. . . . Although the majority of the young men are Negro and one or two, maybe more, 'hate Whitey,' they are no different from other young people."

"My experience at Camp Atterbury has been most instrumental in deciding whether or not I would pursue a career in teaching. Beyond this, it has provided me with a means of determining my role as a Black in the Black Revolution. The honesty and overwhelming sincerity of some Corpsmen and staff aided me considerably in the resolution of this inner conflict."

"I have encountered racial rejection by some Corpsmen. With some I have been able to overcome the racial issue. Others continue to feel prejudice but are able to accept my guidance as a teacher. The racial prejudice I have experienced has made me more sensitive to the Corpsmen's own experiences."

Impact on Teacher Training Institutions

Despite all of our "research," there is still much to learn about "disadvantaged" youth. Experience in settings like the Job Corps has, at the very least, made teacher educators aware of the value of working intensively in field situations. It has also helped to broaden the concept regarding those sites deemed acceptable for student teaching laboratory experiences.

Participating universities have reacted to their Job Corps contracts individually. Some have expanded their offerings to include courses on the psychology and sociology of teaching the "disadvantaged," while some (Indiana University, for one) have modified existing educational foundations and methods courses to focus on problems of the inner city. More attention is given individualized tutoring, often directly in the centers, prior to student teaching. One university has experimented with a student teaching period of variable length, tailored to the needs of each trainee. To minimize the student teacher's initial shock in encountering programmed materials at Job Corps centers, participating universities give increased attention to that approach.

The project has benefited Job Corps centers, staffs, and corps members in a variety of ways. It is perhaps useful to look at a list of benefits submitted by the Cleveland Job Corps:

- Recognition of our center by Cleveland State University as a high-quality, competent, teacher-training associate
- Student teachers who have been involved with the Job Corps have become active purveyors of good will
- An excellent variety of teaching in the classroom as well as excellence in the examples of personal standards shared with our Corpswomen
- Better teaching performance by those on our staff to whom student teachers were assigned
- Increase in the size of the teaching staff by the number of student teachers during the period of their assignment, thereby increasing individual instruction and breadth of learning.
- New ideas, methods and materials have been shared with our staff and Corpswomen
- On occasion, student teachers have served as substitutes in the absence of staff teachers. During the summer, at vacation peaks, some student teachers who have been graduated and certified have been employed as substitutes
- The opportunity for our Corpswomen to have an informal, but positive, identification with college students has certainly contributed to their own feelings about college training as a possibility for themselves or family

• Increased access to consultation with Cleveland State University and its various resources which are available to us as partners

• Tuition-free graduate credit courses have been made available to our staff (and in some cases, a stipend is included). As of this date, four such opportunities exist (without stipend).

Impact on the Professional Community

The impact of the project on the professional community has, in some cases, furthered the idea of placement of student teachers in non-traditional practicum settings. In others, it has served as another placement resource. The University of New Mexico places student teachers in private schools, Indian schools, Concentrated Employment Programs, and technical vocational institutes. Indiana University places students in private schools, as well as in a state hospital, a technical vocational college, and schools for the blind and deaf.

Recruitment and selection procedures for student teachers have been expanded to cover all inner-city placements. Commitment to, and identification with, inner-city students has been shown to be as vital as subject matter competence.

The project has fostered diverse objectives:

• It has served to promote closer relationships between and within departments, subject areas, and courses. It has also provided a laboratory setting for the application of coursework in urban education, non-standard English, and Black studies.

• It has helped to promote cultural awareness in professors and has emphasized the need for more help from teacher educators in bringing about social change.

• It has encouraged more tutoring and pre-student teaching experiences in culturally diverse situations.

• It has created an awareness of the need for special instruction, through seminars or courses, in cultural awareness, motivation, sociology, psychology, and working with the "disadvantaged."

• It has created a greater interest in using prospective teachers in the areas of special education, counseling, physical education, health, recreation, art, and music. In addition, vocational education and programmed instruction have received greater emphasis.

Since 1968 the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, as we have seen, has cooperated with the Job Corps in testing the postulate that Job Corps centers may constitute a useful portion of one's preservice professional preparation. Now, in addition to AACTE, that premise has been supported by many other professional associations. Among them are the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP), National Commission on Teacher Education and Professional Standards (TEPS), National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), Association of Teacher Educators (ATE), and National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC). Numerous local and state superintendents of public instruction, principals, teachers, and college professors have individually volunteered their endorsements of the program.

The project universities would make no claim that Job Corps or other agencies like it—with their unconventional methodology—offer the only or even the best available approach to student teaching. They do posit, however, that it is no longer adequate to provide only one setting to meet the requirements of a pluralistic society.

For the participants at least, Job Corps has offered one more option, one more resource from which to choose in the process of structuring more effective teacher education programs.

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